

# HOMEOWNER NEWSLETTER

FALL 2024 VOLUME 05



## FALL MAINTENANCE REMINDERS

### OUTSIDE

- Clear out and cover window wells
- Shut off outdoor spigots once temps drop
- Drain hoses and rain barrels
- Check for proper operation of garage door safety sensor
- Leave some leaves (and flower heads/stems) for insects and their eggs to overwinter

## MONEY SAVINGS TIPS FOR YOUR HOME

Little savings add up throughout the year! Beyond turning out lights and taking shorter showers, here are easy measures you can take to save money and reduce your utility usage:

- Weather strip/air seal in your basement, attic, and around doors/windows and electrical outlets
- Keep garage door closed when temps fall
- Lower thermostat by 2 degrees (or more!) during cold months
- Use fans to move air around and supplement both heating and cooling
- Install low-flow faucet aerators and water fixtures
- Most homeowners can turn their water heater down to 120-125 degrees
- Switch to a low usage trashcan with the Borough
- Utilize Buy Nothing and neighborhood listservs for tool sharing, etc.

Visit the '[Homeowner Resources](#)' tab on our website for the full seasonal maintenance checklist

### INSIDE

- Test shut-off valves for interior plumbing connections
- Kitchen: Clean dishwasher filter; vacuum dust on back of fridge to improve efficiency
- Insulate exposed water and heating pipes
- Test smoke/CO2 detectors and fire extinguishers

## BOROUGH LEAF COLLECTION Sept. 9-Dec. 12

Leaves should be unbagged and raked within 5 feet of curb by 7am on the Monday of collection week.



Area 1	Area 2
College Heights West of Atherton St	South of College Ave East of Atherton St
Sept 9 Sept 12	Sept 9 Sept 12
Sept 16 Sept 19	Sept 16 Sept 19
Sept 23 Sept 26	Sept 30 Oct 3
Oct 7 Oct 10	Oct 14 Oct 17
Oct 21 Oct 24	Oct 28 Oct 31
Nov 4 Nov 7	Nov 11 Nov 14
Nov 18 Nov 21	Nov 25 Nov 28
Dec 2 Dec 5	Dec 2 Dec 5
Dec 9 Dec 12	Dec 9 Dec 12

<https://www.statecollegepa.us/254/Leaf-Collection>

## SPOTLIGHT: WATERS SOFTENERS

We are fortunate to have safe and clean drinking water in State College, but our hard water can be a nuisance in the home! The average water hardness for the SCBWA service area is 203mg/L, categorized by the US Geological Survey as 'Very Hard' (>180mg/L as calcium carbonate). While hard water is safe to consume, it can make hair, body, dishes, and clothes more difficult to clean and causes mineral and soap scum build up over time. If you're frustrated with this mineral build up, it may be worth adding a **water softener** to your home.

### HOW DO THEY WORK?

The majority of water softeners are salt-based systems that remove minerals like calcium and magnesium from the water. The minerals bind to charged resin beads, thereby "softening" the water. A salt brine in a separate tank is used to recharge the resin beads; the salt needs to be manually replenished every 30 days or so.

Another option is a **water conditioner**, which is a salt-free system that helps filter water and bind with heavy minerals; the minerals remain in the water but can no longer 'stick' to your plumbing fixtures and cause the mineral build up. It could be a better option for you if utility space is limited. However, it may not fully resolve concerns with washing hair/body, dishes, and clothing.

Depending on your utility set up, another consideration is a **monthly softener tank exchange service** through a company such as Culligan--No heavy lifting of salt bags required.

**COST:** Units vary depending on the grain count (needs are based on household size and water hardness) with systems ranging from \$500-1200+, plus installation. Lifespan is 10-15 years.

*In the short-term, you can use vinegar to help break down visible mineral deposits and soap scum on your plumbing fixtures. Spray on your bathtub, sink, and faucets.*

## EMERGENCY REPAIR FUND

**Water heater go kaput? Sudden sewer emergency? Rainy weather causing moisture issues?**

SCCLT has a loan available to assist homeowners with emergency home repairs. We understand that problems can arise unexpectedly and sometimes require quick action to prevent further concern or damage.

This 0% interest loan will provide funding of up to \$2,500 to assist with emergency-type repairs. This loan is not intended to fund preventative maintenance: For example, the loan would help with a roof leak, but it is not intended to replace an entire roof at the end of its life cycle. For larger home projects, SCCLT can share other resources and funding opportunities.

## ELECTRIFY YOUR HOME: PORTABLE INDUCTION STOVE

Curious about **induction** but not ready to commit to a full induction stove quite yet?

**Portable 1-2 burner induction stove tops** are relatively inexpensive (under \$100) and are a great way to try cooking with induction. For those currently cooking on a gas stove, you will likely notice a similar speed and responsiveness with induction. Those with standard electric ranges will be pleasantly surprised at how quickly the pan heats up! If your pots/pans can hold a magnet on the bottom, they will work with induction.



## 2ND ANNUAL

# CHILI COOK-OFF

We're hosting our second Homeowner Chili Cook Off in November--Crank up your crockpot and get cooking! Look for an invitation with a date and more details in October.